

Murder at High Tide

By CHARLES G. BOOTH

SYNOPSIS: Caroline Brent is freed from her abductors. Her maid le Balafre, following a fierce gun battle, is shot. These two ex-convicts are killed by "Professor Johns" who is revealed as Jules LaCote, their betrayer in a crime 25 years ago. A shot by Allen Hunt kills LaCote, the alias John. Anatole Fliques, the adroit French detective, begins his explanation of the mystery that brought death to Dan Paradou and his hired man, Granger. Fliques contends that Johns shot both men from the island fort at high tide—when The Gut's fury denuded the sound of his abject dominion. The deputy attorney, reports that they actually heard the shot that killed Granger. Fliques replies, "You just thought so."

CHAPTER 37 SHOTS FROM THE TOWER

ALL of us were breathless as Fliques continued. "First we shall consider the murder of monsieur. It is perhaps 200 yards from this room to the tower. The north window of the tower and the patio window of the room are on a—um—that word, M. l'Antiquaire?"

"Diagonal line, do you mean?" I inquired. "Mais oui. From the tower at night one may observe this writing table and the fireplace. It is clear that M. Johns, up in that top room, saw M. Hunt leave M. Paradou. He then took up his telephone and summoned M. Paradou, who answered, as Mlle. Ferris, and M. Johns himself have testified.

"Perhaps they talked of the fury of The Gut, as that Johns said. I do not know. Is it not sufficient that monsieur stepped to the window and opened it, and that Johns shot him from the top window of his tower, and that monsieur dropped at the feet of Madame, who approached the window at that moment?"

"You can't tell me that any man with a pistol—
"If M. le Deputy will contain himself—
"Sorry," Samuels granted. "The alibi of Hendricks," Fliques continued importantly, "supported M. Johns' statement that he had not left his tower. But what of the killing of that poor Granger? M. Johns, I have said, aspired to perfection.

"Very well. This Johns desired a shot to be discharged in the library at the moment he shoots Granger from his tower. There was a problem, for any man, but those three, le Balafre and Cleoran Bec and Jules LaCote—were they not devils of cleverness?"

"Granger, M. Johns remembered, laid kindling in the grate each morning. And so M. Johns prepares a blank cartridge and before the time of the high tide he conceals it among the kindling. When the flame heats the blank it will explode. No one but Granger will light the kindling. That clever one, Johns, departs unobserved, as he came by the patio window, which he leaves open, monsieur!"

"Darned clever!" Samuels ejaculated. "But what about The Gut? He wouldn't be able to hear the shell in his lower room for the row in The Gut?"

"Has monsieur forgotten the telephone used on the writing table?" Fliques inquired. "Did not I assure him it was the living friend? M. Johns left it so, my friend, and hurried to his tower. I suspect that clever one telephoned to Granger and commanded him to light a fire in the library."
"That is just what happened," Celia interrupted. "I was in Father's room at the time. His telephone rang. It must have been Johns, although Father didn't say. Whoever it was, wanted a fire in the library, he said."

"You have that picture, yes?" Fliques resumed. "M. Johns looks out of his dark tower window... his telephone and his way, on are ready. Granger enters the patio. That rascal, Johns, has his telephone strapped to his ear... he seizes his weapon and presses closer to his window. Outside The Gut is in torment... Granger enters. He leans forward... his back toward the patio window... he strikes a match... the fire is kindled. A sizzle... then crack, as the shell in the grate explodes. It bangs upon the ear of M. Johns and he fires his weapon with an accuracy... Messieurs et mesdames, it is done."

Fliques had given as a pretty vivid picture. Celia was weeping, and Caroline's arms were around her. "And I clinched his alibi by phoning to find out if he were in the tower," Samuels muttered in deep disgust. "What was the weapon, Fliques?"

"It was a rifle, M. le Deputy."
"Nonsense!" Samuels exploded. "Those rifles had the rifling marks of a Colt forty-five automatic pistol. What's the answer?"

Fliques twirled his mustache. "The weapon, monsieur was a rifle—a rifle of the Springfield army pattern, and it had—"
"It couldn't have been!" Samuels shouted.
"—and it had," Fliques continued importantly. "The rifling of a Colt forty-five automatic pistol."
Samuels drew a handkerchief across his forehead.

"That's a pretty big chunk to swallow," he said. "It takes an expert to do a job like that."

Fliques beamed. "Did I not inform you that it was thought the famous Jules LaCote once served in an arsenal of France? Clearly, he would have the knowledge. Did not poor Granger have a lathe in his workshop? Has not M. Annerey informed us that Granger sometimes took the little vacation?"

"On these occasions there remained on the island of Le Deputy, would it be difficult, I ask you, for that rascal to procure the tool with which to bore out that old rifling and increase the caliber from—308, is it?—to 45?"

"Easy enough," Samuels admitted. "But that doesn't rifle the barrel with a Colt pistol rifling—unless he sent it to a factory."
"The rifling is the big job, as you say. But to one who has served in an arsenal of France, who has the shrewdness, the terrified heart, much time, and a trifle of money, it is nothing. Monsieur, that Johns had all of those. And if certain trifles had to be made at a factory, what of that? Poor Granger takes his little holiday and M. Johns employs his lathe to prepare the rifle that is to kill him."

"I guess you are right," Samuels said soberly. "He must have done it."
"Precisement. You shall see."
Fliques took himself into the oil-lard room, reemerging with the game bag, the long steel rod he had found in Granger's workshop, and a rifle—not the one I had relieved him of, but a 1906 Springfield army rifle. Most of the stock had been cut away from the barrel, around which had been sweated wide strips of steel to strengthen it. The butt, also, had been cut down—to lessen the depth of the rifle, I suppose. Fliques presented the rod for Samuels' inspection.

"This rod, M. le Deputy—you have seen it before, yes? It is the cutter rod. This—touching the metal piece into which the rod fitted—is the cutter. As the grooves in the rifle are to be deepened, this cutter may be raised by—um—inserting a trifle of paper under it. Monsieur understands the process, oui?"

Samuels shook his head impatiently. "The rod and the cutter—are they not pulled back through the barrel, turning, as they come, according to the—what, is it?—that is inserted? Thus a shaving of steel is pared off, the rod returns, the cutter it is raised, and the artisan—does he not repeat that process until the rifling is finished?"

Fliques took up his rifle. "Monsieur has observed these bands of steel. Widening the bore of the rifle from the caliber 308 to the caliber 45 weakened the barrel and M. Johns—the word, M. l'Antiquaire?"

"Compensated for the lessened resistance of the barrel—is that what you mean?" I ventured. "I thank you, monsieur," Fliques bowed. "That infamous Johns compensated for the lessened resistance of the barrel by strengthening it with these bands of steel."
Fliques put the rifle down. "The cartridge was a nothing for one of his skill. Would he not remove the bullet from the 30 caliber rifle cartridge, cut off the thin end of the cartridge case, and force the 45 caliber pistol bullet into the rifle cartridge he had cut down?"

"Clearly, M. Johns disposed of his tools when he had finished with them, and almost certainly he cast them into the sea. Perhaps he did not cast that rod far enough and poor Granger found it one day when he looked to his lobster traps at the low tide. Also, M. Johns would gather up his shavings of steel, but perhaps the fragments of M. Granger and I found had been trod into the dirt beneath the father and he missed them. It does not matter."

"Where was the rifle, you ask? Certainly, M. Johns would not hide it in his tower. No, he would put it where no one would expect to find it—no one but Anatole Fliques, perhaps, and the little man twirled his mustache.
"And where was that but in the fat stomach of that old cannon in front of the fort?"

Fliques' face sobered. "Poor Granger! Clearly, he was—how you say it?—reconstructing the murder of monsieur from the rod and his shaving of steel. A man of intelligence, Granger!"

Samuels winked at that and so did I. It seemed now that we should have deduced something of the truth from the facts Fliques had flouted in our faces so parsimoniously. Then Samuels asked the question that must have been in the minds of every one of us.
"What about the motive?" he said morosely. "Why did Johns kill Paradou after living on San Lucas for 25 years?"

"That final question, Fliques answers in the concluding chapter."

Best Speller



Ruth Waterman, 12, of Oakdale, Wash., won the state spelling championship. She made two errors out of 350 words.

ASTORIA FEDERAL BLDG. BILL IN HOUSE HOPPER

WASHINGTON, June 12.—(AP)—The second deficiency appropriation bill reported today by the house appropriations committee, recommends expenditures of approximately \$25,000,000 for public buildings throughout the country.

JACKSONVILLE

JACKSONVILLE, Ore., June 12.—(Special.) Mr. and Mrs. Jim Wainwright of Copper, brought their small daughter in for medical attention, the little girl having run a large splinter in her foot.

Mrs. Joe Ginet and children of Sterling visited in Jacksonville Saturday.

Fred Martin, Walter White and Bert Jones of Medford, called at the Fred Butcher home Sunday.

Royal Neighbor ladies met at the home of Mrs. Myrtle Merrifield Friday afternoon and enjoyed bridge. At the close of the social hour, refreshments were served.

Friends and neighbors were saddened Monday morning when they learned of the death of Mrs. D. A. Forbes at the home of her parents in Medford. The community joins in extending sincere sympathy to the bereaved family.

Richard Gilman of Klamath Falls spent the week end visiting at the T. E. Lawhead home.

Mrs. Elmer Adams of Medford is working at the telephone office during Mrs. Wilson's absence.

Billie Dunnington visited over the week end at the home of his uncle and aunt in Central Point.

George Wood who has been on a two weeks sojourn returned home last week.

Miss Armeta Kayser of San Francisco is visiting at the S. E. Evans home.

Mrs. Coulter entertained several playmates of her little granddaughter, Betty Paul on Saturday. The occasion being Betty's fifth birthday anniversary.

'THE ROGUE SONG' PROVIDES FEAST FOR EYE AND EAR

A feast for the eye and ear is the gorgeous and colorful sound picture, "The Rogue Song," fashioned from the operetta, "Gypsy Love," with much of the Lehar music interpolated. It is roistering, charming and dramatic—not an opera nor a drama, but a very pleasing mixture of both—and above all has as its star Lawrence Tibbett of Metropolitan Opera company renown, famed for his magnificent baritone voice with its exceptional volume, fine tonal quality, vibration and training.

"The Rogue Song," which opened at the Fox Craterian theater yesterday, will run at this house afternoon and night until Sunday.

Tibbett proved to be all that we had heard proclaimed of him; he is not only a wonderful singer, but possesses an excellent speaking voice, a pleasing personality, unusual acting ability and vim and dash.

The settings and the scenery are particularly charming, notably the rugged and picturesque gypsy village fastnesses as the locale for this romantic tale of a fiery, singing bandit chief in the Caucasus mountains falling in love with a princess, kidnapping her after killing her brother for ruining the life of his sister, and carrying her off to his hill village and finally winning her love after a series of daring escapes from soldiers and a tumultuous wedding.

"The Rogue Song" is all in technicolor and this, together with the singing of Tibbett and the choruses in colorful gypsy camps, and elsewhere, the big ballet dances in picturesque palace grounds, along with the fact that Laurel and Hardy, that leading team of droll screen comedians, furnish the comedy relief, make the big production a beautiful one to see and hear—and one that is pleasing to most all types of movie patrons.

Tibbett, as the romantic vagabond, Robin Hood-like swashbuckling but without murderous bandit chief, sings a group of songs ranging from operatic arias to simple love ballads, while participating in a series of dramatic episodes. What makes his songs more effective is that most of them are aimed to attract the attention of the princess, played by Catherine Dale Owen, whose beauty, stateliness and general charm forms an excellent contrast.

As the tall, athletic, handsome bandit chief, he climbs in windows, jumps from roofs or balconies, leaps on horses and with his band does seemingly daring tricks of horsemanship.

In addition to those named above the lesser parts in the cast are taken by Wallace McDonald, Kate Price, Nancy O'Neil, Lionel Belmore, Judith Vossell, Ulrich Haupt, Alice Aisen and Florence Lake.

The program is rounded out by a news review, and Van and Schenk in a singing act.

EDEN PRECINCT HAS HEAVY STAND OF OATS

EDEN PRECINCT, Ore., June 12.—(Special.) One of the big old crops of oats ever grown in the valley is now standing on about fifty acres in the different tracts, between Talent and Phoenix.

The variety mostly sown this spring was the big gray oat and the seed was almost entirely clean of any other seed. Most of the tracts have oats over four feet in height and look like solid grain.

EDEN PRECINCT

EDEN PRECINCT, Ore., June 12.—(Special.) One of the big old trucks was overturned Tuesday morning at the Anderson Creek bridge, near the old E. K. Anderson residence and the detour road was blocked most of the forenoon.

It seems good to have the big stage pass down the main highway between Talent and Phoenix again.

PHOENIX CHURCH FOLK ATTEND ASHLAND MEET

PHOENIX, Ore., June 12.—(Sp.) Mrs. J. E. Roberts, superintendent of the Int. society and Miss Jean Rose, president of the Young People's society, and Joe Hartley, quiet hour superintendent of the union, and E. W. Caster, president of the Crater Lake union, all of the Presbyterian church here, attended the executive meeting of the officers and workers of Crater Lake Union at the Ashland Christian church Tuesday evening.

WORLD WAR OFFICER PASSES AT REUNION

WEST POINT, N. Y., June 12.—(AP)—Colonel James M. Andrews, 61, Brookline, Mass., commander of the 19th infantry, 37th division in the world war, died suddenly while attending a class reunion here.

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